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SUBJECT: April 10 MFA Press Briefing: Dalai Lama, Olympic Torch, North Korea Nuclear Talks, Australian Prime Minister

1 Key points at the April 10 MFA Press Briefing were:

-- China has dealt with the Dalai Lama with patience and restraint, but the Dalai Lamas actions have undermined the basis for talk.

-- Recent protests by monks in Gansu Province are an indication that the monks do have freedom of speech.

-- An investigation is needed into attacks on Chinese diplomatic missions abroad.

-- The Olympic torch was welcomed in San Francisco by locals and patriotic overseas Chinese.

-- The torch relay will go on and not be stopped by any forces.

-- On the North Korea nuclear issue, some progress has been made on declaration-related issues and conditions are getting "more mature" for talks between the chief negotiators.

Dalai Lama Condemned, Situation in Tibetan Regions

¶2. At the April 10, 2008 regular MFA press briefing, MFA spokesperson Jiang Yu said China hopes all countries with friendly relations with China will not support the Dalai Lama's separatism. Jiang emphasized that China has exercised "patience and restraint," regarding the Dalai Lama, but his recent actions have "undermined the basis for talks." Jiang reiterated that China is willing to speak with the Dalai Lama if he gives up separatism and criminal violence and stops undermining the Olympics. Regarding the Dalai Lama's statements on peace, Jiang said that it is "not important what he says -- his rhetoric of peace is just a lie to deceive the world." The issues with the Dalai Lama are not religious or ethnic in nature, but related to sovereignty, said Jiang.

¶3. Jiang said recent Tibet incidents were handled with restraint and that 130 governments have announced their support for the Chinese Government's actions. The recent protests during a tour by journalists of Labrang Monastery in Xiahe demonstrated that there is freedom of expression in China, said Jiang. The monks all have legally guaranteed rights to "survival, religious beliefs and development." The handful of monks who spoke out represent a small portion of the 1000 monks who inhabit that monastery. Trips for journalists and diplomats were organized to satisfy the demand for information about Tibet, and China hopes the situation can return to normal soon, said Jiang.

¶4. Regarding calls for an independent investigation, Jiang said that violent acts and riots occur frequently in other countries but there are not independent investigations. The investigation that is needed is into the many attacks on China's diplomatic missions. Jiang said she would respond officially later to the U.S. House of Representatives resolution criticizing China's handling of the Tibet issue.

¶5. As to whether or not foreigners will be allowed into Tibet

starting on May 1 as previously suggested, Jiang told reporters to check with the local government in Tibet. Asked whether foreign reporters are currently allowed in Yunnan, Qinghai or Gansu, Jiang said some of the regions in these provinces may be closed because of violence, but journalists should contact local governments for more specific information.

Olympic Boycotts, Torch Relay Protests

¶6. Jiang said that she had not seen reports that Nicolas Sarkozy would not attend the Beijing Olympic opening ceremony unless China began a dialogue with the Dalai Lama. In response to a question about Gordon Brown's attendance, Jiang said Brown will attend the closing ceremony and that Xinhua's report that he would attend the opening ceremony is purely an error by Xinhua, not the Chinese Government. The Beijing Olympic Organizing Committee will warmly welcome all invited guests. Whether foreign politicians attend or not is between that politician and his local Olympic committee.

¶7. The torch relay in San Francisco was welcomed by patriotic overseas Chinese and San Francisco locals, said Jiang. The relay will "spread the Olympic spirit" around the world and will not be stopped by "any forces." Regarding the Chinese flame escorts, Jiang said they are not law enforcement officials and their presence was requested by the Olympic Committees of the countries involved. China is satisfied with the security preparations in Australia and India for the torch relay there.

¶8. Jiang had not heard remarks from International Olympic Committee Chairman Jacques Rogge regarding China's need for "moral engagement" but suggested that these comments were possibly exaggerated or distorted.

A/S Hill Meetings in Beijing

BEIJING 00001355 002 OF 002

¶9. The spokesperson said that Vice Foreign Minister Wu Dawei met yesterday with relevant officials from the DPRK and the United States about their bilateral meetings in Singapore. Jiang said the United States and North Korea made some progress on declaration-related issues. All parties agreed the results were positive and conducive to pressing ahead with the Six-Party Talks. China believes the conditions for a meeting of the chief negotiators is becoming "more mature."

Australian Prime Minister Meets Wen Jiabao

¶10. During Australian Prime Minister Kevin Rudd's conversations with Premier Wen Jiabao, Rudd expressed understanding over Tibet, his willingness to be a long-term partner of China and his support for the one China policy and the Beijing Olympics. Wen expanded on China's policy towards Taiwan and briefed Rudd on the development of Tibet. China and Australia released a joint statement on Climate change which reaffirmed their commitment to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change and the Kyoto Protocol, said Jiang.

Iran Nuclear Issue, Iraq Invasion Anniversary, Visits

¶11. P-5 plus 1 representatives will meet to discuss the Iran nuclear issue in Shanghai. Asked about the fifth anniversary of the invasion of Iraq, Jiang said China believes the issue should be resolved under the relevant United Nations resolutions. China hopes the country returns to stability soon. Jiang announced that Foreign Minister Yang Jiechi will visit Japan April 12-20 and Thai Foreign Minister Noppadon Pattama will visit China April 14-15.

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